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Letter dated 24 July 2002 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Peru to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General of the World Summit for Sustainable Development

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the Declaration of Huaraz on the Sustainable Development of Mountain Ecosystems, adopted at the World Meeting on Mountain Ecosystems, "Mountains to 2020: water, life and production", which was attended by representatives and experts from Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Germany, the United States of America, France, Italy, Mexico, Nepal, the Netherlands, Peru, Spain, South Africa, Switzerland and Venezuela, and was held on 14 June 2002 in Huaraz, Peru (see annex).

I request that the present letter and its annex be issued as a document of the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

(*Signed*) Marco **Balarezo**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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Annex to the letter dated 24 July 2002 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Peru to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General of the World Summit on Sustainable Development

[Original: Spanish]

Huaraz Declaration on the Sustainable Development of Mountain Ecosystems

Representatives and experts from Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, France, Germany, Italy, Mexico, Nepal, the Netherlands, Peru, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, the United States of America and Venezuela, meeting in Huaraz from 12 to 14 June 2002 on the occasion of the World Meeting on Mountain Ecosystems, "Mountains to 2020: water, life and production", have drawn up the following Declaration:

Welcoming the United Nations initiative to declare 2002 the International Year of Mountains in order to create greater awareness of the importance of conserving mountain ecosystems and promoting the sustainable development of mountain populations,

Recalling previous efforts aimed at the sustainable development of mountain ecosystems, such as the proposals put forward in 1991 by the Andean countries in the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development; the agreements reached in the framework of the Manaus Declaration on the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992; and chapter 13 of Agenda 21 (Managing fragile ecosystems: sustainable mountain development) of 1992,

Recognizing the role of agencies of the United Nations system, such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the Focus Group on Mountains, among others, and the efforts made by various national, regional and international groups,

Combining efforts, in the process arising from the Cuzco Declaration on Sustainable Development of Mountain Ecosystems, to promote sustainable mountain development,

Joining in international processes for the sustainable development of mountains at the preparatory meetings for the World Summit on Sustainable Development to be held in Johannesburg, Republic of South Africa,

Conscious of the opportunities afforded by the International Year of Mountains and by the preparations for the World Summit on Sustainable Development for advancing the environmental, economic and social agenda of mountain countries, particularly with respect to the alliances being forged in the context of that global event,

Bearing in mind that:

1. The sustainable development of mountain ecosystems in an era marked by climate change and globalization and their impact on those ecosystems requires that

all Governments combine efforts for the conservation and sustainable use of the environment and natural resources.

2. The wide diversity and extreme economic, social and environmental vulnerability of mountain ecosystems require the integrated management of water resources, life and production, with a focus on ecosystems, at the local and national levels.

3. The geographical, climatic, biological and social heterogeneity of mountain areas and the diversity of production activities require that processes that are sustainable and products that add value should be identified at the local and regional levels in order to help generate employment and alleviate poverty.

We hereby declare:

With respect to the management and sustainable use of water resources, the need to:

- Recognize that water is a common, vital and strategic asset.
- Promote integrated watershed management, recognizing the function of mountain ecosystems in water production.
- Promote local, regional and national institution-building to ensure sustainable water use.
- Promote participatory water resource management processes that give the entire population fair and equitable access to the use and benefits of water resources, recognizing the importance of indigenous, peasant and other local communities.
- Incorporate the different approaches of rural and urban populations and the various production sectors into water resources management processes.
- Contribute to recognizing the value of water produced by watersheds, particularly in mountain areas.
- Seek ways of rewarding the conservation and sustainable use of water resources.
- Promote technologies for the use of water resources that guarantee water quality and sustainability and take account of traditional uses and knowledge.
- Promote research into mountain ecosystem conservation.
- Promote, implement and strengthen inter-institutional cooperation programmes at the national, regional and international levels.

With respect to biological and cultural diversity, the need to:

- Encourage the conservation and sustainable use of ecosystems, species and genetic resources in mountain areas.
- Use social and cultural diversity for the benefit of the sustainable development of mountain populations.
- Take into account the different circumstances, special characteristics and specific problems of mountain areas and the possible solutions offered by the cultural heritage of their populations, including their traditional knowledge.

- Promote education systems and the teaching of skills that are adapted to the specific living conditions of mountain areas.
- Promote exchanges of experience and know-how among mountain countries on sustainable development and vulnerability.

With respect to production processes in mountain ecosystems, the need to:

- Identify the comparative advantages of competitive, sustainable products and production chains originating in mountain areas.
- Promote in mountain areas sustainable production processes that offer greater economic and environmental benefits, as well as more equitable distribution, throughout production chains.
- Strengthen producers' associations at all levels of sustainable production chains and establish links with global markets and financing mechanisms.
- Promote sustainable tourism in mountain countries, maximizing the benefits for local populations and preserving natural and cultural heritage and values.
- Facilitate and encourage access to information and knowledge, duly coordinating and integrating traditional and modern technologies and know-how.
- Promote the local capacity-building with respect to sustainable production in mountain ecosystems, integrating knowledge and practices and encouraging the active participation of local people.
- Encourage research into the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the various production activities in mountain ecosystems.

And recommend that:

1. The Governments of mountain countries should give their backing to this Declaration.

2. Actions should be taken that are consistent with those recommended in this Declaration and with the spirit of chapter 13 of Agenda 21, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the outcomes, with regard to mountains, of the World Summit on Sustainable Development to be held in Johannesburg.

3. In an effort to establish specific commitments that contribute to the implementation of chapter 13 of Agenda 21, a working group on mountain ecosystems should be created, taking advantage of the opportunities afforded by preparations for the World Summit on Sustainable Development for forging and strengthening alliances that coordinate the efforts of Governments and the main groups identified in Agenda 21, with a view to working together to achieve sustainable mountain development.

Huaraz, 14 June 2002